

NEW YORK HERALD

BROADWAY AND ANN STREET.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT,
PROPRIETOR.

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VOLUME XL.....NO. 33

AMUSEMENTS TO-NIGHT.

BRYANT'S OPERA HOUSE.
Twenty-third street, near Sixth Avenue.—NEGRO MINSTRELLERS, &c., at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Dan Bryant.

GERMANIA THEATRE.
Fourth street, near Broadway.—DER GEWISSENSWEHM, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Ida Mast.

NIRLO.
Broadway.—TOM AND JERRY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

SAN FRANCISCO MINSTRELS.
Broadway, corner of Twenty-ninth street.—NEGRO MINSTRELLERS, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

ROBINSON HALL.
Sixteenth street, near Broadway.—THE DUEL CASE, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Mr. Macabre.

GLOBE THEATRE.
Broadway.—VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

WALLACK'S THEATRE.
Broadway.—THE SHAGBRAIN, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Mr. Boucault.

BROOKLYN THEATRE.
Washington street, near Little Eddy, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

ACADEMY OF DESIGN.
Corner of Twenty-third street and Fourth Avenue.—EXHIBITION OF WATER COLOR PAINTINGS. Open from 9 A. M. to 10 P. M.

WOOD'S MUSEUM.
Broadway, corner of Thirtieth street.—WITCHES OF NEW YORK, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Maritime at 8 P. M.

METROPOLITAN THEATRE.
No. 56 Broadway.—VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

NEW YORK STADT THEATRE.
Bowery.—EIN STAATSGEHEIMNIS, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.
No. 64 Broadway.—VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

THEATRE COMIQUE.
No. 64 Broadway.—VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

BROOKLYN PARK THEATRE.
COLONEL SINN'S VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

ROMAN HIPPODROME.
Twenty-sixth street and Fourth Avenue.—Afternoon and evening, at 2 and 8.

TONT PATRONS' OPERA HOUSE.
No. 20 Bowery.—VARIETY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M.

FIFTH AVENUE THEATRE.
Twenty-ninth street and Broadway.—WOMEN OF THE DAY, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Mr. Lewis, Miss Sampson, Miss Sewell.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC.
Fourteenth street.—English Opera House, at 8 P. M. Miss Jennie Van Zandt.

LYCEUM THEATRE.
Fourth street and Sixth Avenue.—TWIT AXE AND GROWN, at 8 P. M.; closes at 10 P. M. Mrs. Reedy.

TRIPLE SHEET.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1875.

From our reports this morning the probabilities are that the weather to-day will be clear, followed by cloudiness.

WALL STREET YESTERDAY.—The stock market was generally strong. Foreign exchange firm. Money easy on call loans. Gold advanced to 113. Business was active.

THE CRUELTY TO CHILDREN bill is certain to pass the Assembly, and will, no doubt, be successful in the Senate. We are glad that the protection of thousands of little waifs is thus to be secured.

THE NEW ORLEANS INVESTIGATION was resumed yesterday; the testimony for the republicans is elsewhere published, and is intended to show that black voters were intimidated by the White League.

THE APPEAL TO CONGRESS OF Frederick Douglass, Mr. Langston and other representative colored men to secure protection for their race in the South, is given to the public to-day. We are sorry that they have some fear of a retaliatory war, and do not believe there is cause for it.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL BILL was debated in the French Assembly yesterday, and Marshal MacMahon won a preliminary victory by the announcement that if he was deprived of the command of the army he would resign the Presidency. The proposition to that effect was withdrawn.

THE REPUBLICAN MEMBERS of the State Senate have called a private caucus for to-day, we believe, to consider their action on the bills relating to New York city, and especially on the propositions to alter the present charter. It is supposed to be their intention to oppose all amendments that will tend to facilitate changes in the municipal departments.

A WAR CLOUD IN THE PACIFIC.—Mr. Steinberger starts from San Francisco to-day in the man-of-war Pensacola on a mission to establish civilization in the Samoan Islands. For this purpose he takes with him a condemned howitzer, a lot of guns and some flags. A full account of this extraordinary adventure will be found in our despatches to-day, and it will be seen that Mr. Steinberger departs in a United States vessel, with the permission of the President, who seems to be his special admirer. We hope that he will use his great power wisely. If the Samoan Legislature does not do as Mr. Steinberger likes let him disperse it. If there is a league there let him proclaim its members banditti. In short, give us a strong Louisiana policy in the Pacific Ocean, and all will soon be tranquil and happy in that benighted region. But how about the howitzer? It is condemned, but we wonder if Mr. Steinberger will use it.

Rapid Transit—The Meeting at the Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting yesterday at the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce was respectable in numbers, character and public seal, but was of more value for the possibilities it suggests than for the actual results it accomplished. The idea of raising by private subscriptions a large fund to be offered as a bonus to a responsible company, which will build a rapid transit road on a route and plan to be approved by a majority of the subscribers, is excellent in itself, but the expectation that an adequate fund can be made up by petty subscriptions of one thousand dollars each is one of those seductive illusions into which sanguine men are apt to fall when kindled to enthusiasm for some great object without coolly weighing the efficiency and adaptation of the means for its accomplishment. We heartily approve of the meeting, of the deep interest in the rapid transit question which it betokens, of its plan of stimulating the movement by volunteer efforts, and even of its thousand dollar subscriptions. Every citizen who engages to give that sum enlists in the cause, gives a pledge of his sincerity, and binds himself to act as a missionary in propagating and diffusing public interest in the question. If the effort is well managed it is possible that a million dollars may be raised in this manner, but a million is such a bagatelle to the heavy cost of the enterprise that it is necessary to look to other sources for a fund adequate to the occasion. The plan starts from an excellent idea, but it needs to be carried out by a different method and on a larger scale. It may be well to raise a million by a thousand subscriptions of a thousand dollars each; but there are wealthy, public spirited men in the city who could contribute a million each without inconvenience, if so inclined, and the success of a volunteer movement depends on the possibility of securing handsomely subscriptions from our great millionaires.

It is the pride and distinction of our country that the possessors of great fortunes, acquired by enterprise and business sagacity, do not incline to make a purely selfish disposition of their wealth. Many of them leave munificent bequests to public institutions in their wills, and many exercise a higher form of generosity by splendid donations for public or charitable uses in their lifetime while they can be personal witnesses of the good they do and have the satisfaction of seeing the institutions which are planted by their aid and watered by their munificence grow up and flourish under their fostering care. This species of generosity in which the rich men of our country excel all others is partly due to the nature of our institutions. In this country estates cannot be entailed, orders of nobility have no place, wealth cannot be employed to support the dignity of a title, and ambition to build up a family to take rank with a hereditary aristocracy is a motive never felt by republican citizens, whose energy and ability raise them to affluence. We, doubtless, have our share of men who cherish a sordid love of property for its own sake, and hold on to it with the firm grip of avarice; but we have also a large proportion who prize wealth chiefly as a badge of success and a title to distinction. The consideration it gives them in the community is the principal source of the satisfaction which they derive from the possession of wealth, and when they have established their claim to stand in the highest rank of successful men of business they have filled the measure of that kind of ambition. Instead of aspiring, as such men do in England, to gain admittance into the charmed circle of the titled aristocracy, and to found families which primumogeniture and entails would perpetuate, they apply a portion of their wealth to objects of public beneficence. The tendency of our institutions to divert property into such channels is illustrated by many instances in this city. The most successful of our merchants, Mr. Stewart, besides his benefactions to seminaries of learning, has built a new town in the suburbs to furnish cheap and pleasant homes for people in moderate circumstances, and has erected a spacious and beautiful building on Fourth Avenue, where tolling women will be able to live in decency and comfort without exhausting their slender means. Mr. Astor has founded a great library and maintains it for the free use of the public; Mr. Cooper has founded a similar institution for the benefit of the laboring classes, as Mr. Astor's is for the benefit of scholars and men of culture. Mr. Anderson has made a noble gift to promote a favorite object of the late Professor Agassiz in providing cheap instruction in the natural sciences. These instances illustrate the disinterested liberality of our New York millionaires and reflect honor upon the class to which they belong. With such men among us, and in view of the examples which some of them have already set, may we not hope that they will be induced to pour the abundant streams of their generosity into a new channel, and confer upon the city in which they have acquired their wealth a benefit which will reach thousands of recipients for every individual who profits by their other benefactions?

We might dwell on the effect of efficient contributions to rapid transit in enhancing the value of their own property. They are the heaviest of our taxpayers, and it would be easy to show that the prodigious rise in property in the upper part of the city would lighten their taxes by multiplying the values on which taxes are levied. It would be easy to demonstrate that cheap rapid communication with the upper part of the island would add to the value of all city property and that the largest owners would profit most by the increase. But we prefer to address our appeal to their public spirit rather than their interest. They have abundantly shown that they are capable of disinterested motives, and if they should now perform a great act of far-seeing generosity nobody would wish to violate its dignity or abate its deserved admiration by suggesting that it proceeded from a sense of interest. If they put forth their strong hands to carry forward rapid transit to early completion it will be in the character of public benefactors, seeking no reward but the esteem of their fellow citizens and the grateful remembrance of those who come after them. We have many citizens who could contribute a million dollars each to a great public object and never feel the poorer for so praiseworthy a deed.

Messrs. Astor, Stewart, Cooper, Vanderbilt, Tilden, Anderson, Brown, Belmont, Duncan, Lenox, Goebel and Taylor are twelve gentlemen who could contribute twelve million dollars to rapid transit and thereby erect a monument more enduring than marble or bronze. They would not stand before the public in the light of an association of capitalists building a road for private profit. It would yield a profit and ultimately a large one, but they could vindicate their character for generosity in one of two ways. They might arrange for sinking all profits in a constant reduction of fares, requiring the rates to be just sufficient for keeping the road in repair; or, which would be still better, they might make a perpetual donation of the profits to institutions of charity located in or near the city. Under the guardianship of trustees, like those who manage the Peabody Fund, the net proceeds could be distributed to worthy institutions for the relief of the unfortunate. It could be so arranged that each contributor would be at liberty to designate the charity to which his proportionate share should be given, and under the names of the Astor Fund, the Stewart Fund, the Cooper Fund, and so forth, long generations of recipients in various institutions would bless the memory of their particular benefactors.

The Mysterious Memoirs of George IV.

The supply is, in most cases, equal to the demand. Occasionally it is greater than the demand, as Brown, the myth, has discovered. He advertised for one book and is offered a whole library. He offered to pay five thousand dollars for one copy and he is asked to pay fifty thousand for ten copies. This is rather hard on Mr. Brown, that, after having declared that but one copy of the mysterious memoirs of George IV. is in existence, he should find the complete edition extant and ready for delivery at No. 559 Broadway, on the terms mentioned. C. O. D. Mr. Fountain T. Fox has the only existing copy in his library at Louisville, Ky., and Captain Leavitt has the only existing copy at Portland, Me. Messrs. J. Sabin & Sons have sold several "only" copies, which are likely to turn up in various parts of the country, and we presume quite a lot of others will be found this week in the Nassau street book stores. That they have been diligently looked for therein is a dead certainty. It is probable that every second hand book stall in New York has been ransacked.

The original mystery of this book about His Majesty George IV. is eclipsed by the new one. The first gentleman in Europe never made as great a bobby in his life as he has done in his memoirs, and we forget the scandal about Mrs. Fitzherbert in looking at the amazing spectacle which Mr. Fox and Mr. Leavitt present. The book is more wonderful in its simultaneous appearance than it is in its contents, and if its custodians continue to come forward its circulation will soon rival our own.

The only copy in existence of this book reminds us of the veterans of the Revolutionary war, the last survivor of which is continually being discovered. It is like the club which killed Captain Cook, which is to be found in every museum, and by the inherent numerousness of which Mr. Barum has beaten all the other possessors. It is like Washington's coachman, three hundred of whom are known to have driven his family horses for thirty years. It is like Washington's nurse, dozens of which still survive in a ripe old age. It is like the skull of St. James, which is reverently exhibited in every Italian village. It is like the latest publication, "which no gentleman's library should be without." It is like the only heir to the Dutch and English fortunes, who is now supposed to be a large part of a population of America. It is like the Original Original Jacobs, and the Original Original Jacobs. It is like the Constitution of the United States, of which Andrew Johnson has the only existing copy. It is like the only true religion, of which each sect is the exclusive possessor. Finally, it is like Sir Boyle Roche's bird, which was known to fly in two places at once, so wonderful was its swiftness, and to sum up its resemblances we beg leave to say that we believe that bird was a canard.

A Silent Lobby.

There is probably no interest more important, more efficient, and at the same time worthy of more attention, than what may be called the sewing machine lobby in Washington. The sewing machine is an invention that has become as necessary to our civilization as the axe or the gridiron; no household can do without it. Beginning in a modest way, it has now spread all over the world, an invention so delicate and intricate, with so many changes and improvements, growing from year to year simpler, cheaper and more useful. Although supply and demand, improved machinery and competition have enabled the sewing machine companies to make the instruments at small cost, there has really been no diminution of the price in America. The reason of this is that a few companies—three or four, we think—have combined and purchased all the patents, and by these rights they compel every machine to pay them an extravagant royalty, amounting to as much as the whole cost of the instrument itself. The consequence is, that in any foreign country—France, Germany, England, and even in Canada—sewing machines are as cheap as stoves. Better machines than we have are sold for less than half the cost. But, by reason of these patents, the combination which owns them, with the interest they have at Washington, a monopoly is formed that practically controls the market in the United States, and every buyer of a sewing machine pays a tax of one hundred per cent to the combination that holds these patent rights.

The agents of this combination have been and are now among the busiest, shrewdest and most effective managers in Washington. The story that they have endeavored to obtain an extension to one of the patents is undoubtedly true, but it is a question whether they have succeeded or failed. Far be it from us to deny to the inventor of one of these machines the profit due to genius and skill; but the protection afforded by a patent to an inventor cannot last forever. The community has rights as well as the inventor. The men who have made sewing machines have amassed fortunes. They have been repaid over and over again for their capital and their skill. It would be wise for Congress to have the whole

subject thoroughly investigated. The result, we think, would show that the sewing machine people have made as much money from their inventions as they are entitled to receive.

The Interest on the City Deposits.

The present city charter provides that the Mayor and the City Chamberlain shall designate the banks or trust companies in which all moneys of the city and county shall be deposited, "but no such bank or trust company shall be designated unless its officers shall agree to pay into the city treasury interest on the daily balances at the rate of not less than four per cent per annum." It further requires that all interest accrued on deposits shall be paid to the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund. Prior to the passage of the charter of 1873 no law existed by which the Chamberlain could be required to demand or collect any interest on the deposits. For a little over three years, however, the Chamberlain had required the banks to pay four per cent on the daily balances, and under Chamberlain Bradley and his predecessor nearly half a million dollars had been thus collected and paid over to the general fund. During Chamberlain Palmer's term of office the city lost the interest, except on a trifling amount of deposits, in consequence of the action of the Comptroller, who notified the banks of deposit not to pay interest to the Chamberlain, and there was no law requiring them to pay it to any other person or in any other manner. The charter of 1873 settled the difficulty by the provisions to which we have referred.

A bill is now before the State Senate—it has already passed the Assembly—abolishing that provision of the charter which fixes the minimum interest to be exacted of the banks of deposit, and giving to the Mayor and Chamberlain authority to agree with the banks upon such a rate as they may deem expedient. We regard the bill as a very dangerous one, and believe that for the public good it ought to be defeated. It would give to a corrupt mayor and chamberlain the power to use the deposits for their own advantage, and to put any proportion of the interest they might please to appropriate into their own pockets. Of course Mayor Wickham and Chamberlain Lane would not do this; but laws should be framed for the protection of the citizens without regard to the honesty of the persons who happen to be for the moment in possession of the public offices. The argument used by those who favor the proposed alteration of the law is that the banks cannot just now afford to pay four per cent on the public deposits, and that circumstances may arise which will render it yet more unprofitable for them to hold the city moneys on such terms. But if the present deposit banks are not willing to pay four per cent interest to the city there are plenty of other banks and trust companies in the city that stand ready to do so. Institutions quite as trustworthy and secure as any of the present city deposit banks pay four per cent interest to private depositors, and are prepared to pay the same on public moneys. There is no good reason, therefore, why such an objectionable alteration of the charter should be asked for, and we regard the bill before the Senate as one that ought to be rejected.

At the same time some amendments might be judiciously made to the thirty-fifth section of the charter, relating to the public deposits. The Chamberlain gives bonds to the amount of one million dollars, which security is intended and ought to cover the safe keeping of the city moneys. The Mayor gives no bonds at all. By uniting the Mayor with the Chamberlain in the designation of the banks of deposit, thus taking the sole responsibility away from the latter officer, we release the Chamberlain's sureties, in case the public money should be deposited in an insecure bank or trust company, and should in consequence be lost. The bondsmen for the acts of the Chamberlain could not be held to answer for acts committed by the Mayor and Chamberlain jointly. It would, therefore, seem eminently proper to place the power of selecting the banks of deposit in the Chamberlain alone, thus securing the city from loss through his sureties, or to require special bonds from the Mayor to answer for the safe keeping of the deposits. It would also seem to be desirable and just that the interest paid on deposits should go into the general fund, and thus directly decrease the taxation of the year, instead of into the sinking fund, which already possesses a surplus over and above the whole city debt for which it is pledged. These amendments to the law regulating the city deposits and the interest thereon would be of public advantage. The proposal to leave the rate of interest to be a matter of public bargain between the banks and the agents of the city is at once unnecessary and dangerous.

New York's Duty.

The eminently practical action which the Philadelphia managers of the Centennial are now taking deserves fair and favorable consideration on our part. It is not a surrender in any sense of the local pride in which, naturally enough, this enterprise had its origin and which occasionally has some rather grotesque manifestations. It is nothing of this kind; for Philadelphia feels that she can have her celebration whether New York aids or not; but it is a frank acknowledgment of brotherhood, it is a manly appeal to brotherly feeling, which must not be disparaged. If there were or are foolish people in Philadelphia so pettishly jealous and self-complacent as to talk about being entirely indifferent to the sympathy of New York they have either changed their minds or are silent. Philadelphia does need our help, and in a manly, straightforward way, comes forward and asks it. We wish New York had not waited to be asked, but, being asked, there ought to be no doubt about her answer. If Philadelphia, like Chicago, were laid waste by fire, or as long ago was the case, desolated by pestilence, there would be no pause in our generosity, no need of asking purses to be opened. When, a hundred years ago, the poor of Boston were suffering the tortures of a siege or of exile, Philadelphia, be it remembered, did not wait to be solicited, but sent, of her abundance, generously. So would it be if God's hand were laid heavily on us. The similitude of the necessity, then and now, is not a very exact one, we concede; but it is not wholly without its appositeness. Neglect or refusal to furnish the relatively small sum Philadelphia asks of us may not lead to absolute failure, but to something kindred to it. And with that pos-

sibility can New York, in common decency, hold back? The exultant echo which will come from abroad when the news goes thither that the United States, through the sympathy of its greatest and richest city, does not care or choose to celebrate the centenary of independence, will sound diametrically in our crowded streets and palatial dwellings. We then shall know what a mistake we have made, not only in a sentimental, but in a material point of view. The sentimental aspect has been presented, it may be, *ad nauseam*, and it is a pity that sentiment and sympathy so pure should ever be wearisome. The tenacious and useless walls (if ever, through our fault, they should prove so) of the great and really magnificent buildings Philadelphia is now erecting will be like grim skeletons of what might have been full of life and health, a standing reproach to the whole country, and to none so poignantly as to us. The material interest we of New York have in its complete success cannot be overestimated. Nobody denies it, and yet nobody does anything to promote it. What an enormous integer of the vast population that will go and carry its products and fabrics to Philadelphia is this city and its neighborhood! Hither, for at least sojourn, must the returning concourse come; for no one pretends that Philadelphia can by any exertion furnish sufficient accommodation. All this without reference to the visitors from abroad who must make New York the point of access.

Tilton on the Witness Stand.

Judge Neilson, after taking the two days that intervened between Friday and Monday for weighing the arguments of counsel, announced yesterday morning his decision to admit the testimony of Tilton, with a restriction against stating the confidential communications of his wife. The fact that so able a Judge decided, after full argument and mature deliberation, to permit Tilton to go on the witness stand, will be accepted by the public as a presumption that his testimony is legally admissible; and it is difficult to see on what ground of equity or common sense it could have been objected to by any who are willing that all the facts be brought to light. Tilton is, of course, under a bias, and allowance should be made for that. But with the exception of Mr. Beecher, who is under a bias at least equally strong, and Mrs. Tilton, who cannot be admitted to testify at all, Tilton is more thoroughly acquainted with the facts than any other individual. It would be morally absurd, even if it were legally permissible, to allow Mr. Beecher to go on to the witness stand and exclude Mr. Tilton. The antecedent presumption against the credibility of the testimony of these interested parties is no greater on the one side than on the other. The motive of Mr. Beecher to save himself from irretrievable disgrace and utter ruin is at least as strong as that of Mr. Tilton for showing that he has suffered a wrong which commonly brings derision on the husband as well as an ineffaceable stain on his wife and children. No motive could bring an ordinary husband of any social pride to swear to such a story unless he believed it true. There is an obvious motive why a man accused of such an offence should deny it, even if true, because a sentiment of honor requires him to shield the woman, though he might be willing to face the personal consequences to himself.

The disgust and horror expressed by Mr. Beecher's friends at the idea of Tilton swearing away the reputation of his wife in a court of justice is proper enough on the supposition of her innocence; but that is the very point in controversy. A husband who has really been wronged in that way is under no obligation, legal or moral, to bear it in patience and silence. The law recognizes his right to complain and to publish his wrong by allowing prosecutions for divorce. Social opinion brands him with contempt if, after learning of such a wrong, he meekly endures it. The fact that a court of justice entertains such a trial as that which is now pending, and that public opinion generally demanded that a court should sit upon and sift this scandal, are patent admissions that the accuser has a right to make the facts known, if he has facts to tell. Every divorce suit, every *crim. con.* suit, involves an attempt by a husband to blacken the reputation of his wife, and if this is too horrible to be permitted the law is wrong which gives a husband a right of action in such cases. We would have abstained from this line of remark if a Brooklyn paper, published under the eyes of the Court, had not last evening attempted to cover Tilton with odium for testifying against his wife. All that we insist on is even-handed justice. Let the plaintiff and the defendant have equal advantages in Court. A rigorous cross-examination on both sides will assist the jury in forming their conclusion. After Judge Neilson decided that this witness has a legal right to testify, it is impertinent to hold him up to public abhorrence for attempting to do what every injured husband necessarily does in seeking legal redress. It lies in the very nature of things that a divorce suit or a *crim. con.* suit brought by a husband cannot be tender of the reputation of his wife.

The Fragility of Railroad Machinery in Frosty Weather and the Mid-guard Rail.

The terrible disaster on the Great Western Railway near Shipton, England, has aroused attention to the fragility of rolling stock and revived the wholesome agitation of the proposed mid-guard rail. This frightful accident to an express train of thirteen crowded cars was due to the breaking of a tire or axle and the precipitation of hundreds of passengers over an embankment. The fracture of axles and the running gear of railway carriages is one of the most unavoidable sources of peril to the passenger. Engineers have clearly traced it to the subtle physical change in the fibrous texture of the best iron, the toughest and most fibrous metal assuming, after long strains, the crystalline form. The Shipton disaster occurred during a thaw, after extreme cold, and seems therefore to connect the fragility of the broken machinery with the frosty weather and its effect on the tensile strength of the tire. The increased liability to such accidents in very cold or thawing weather has long been noticed. A late writer in a scientific journal has shown the strong probability that this increased peril arises not so much from weakening of the metal by cold as from a diminution of the elasticity of the road-bed and also of the machinery. During the intense cold of

December in France the inhabitants of Marseilles reported they could distinctly hear the trains passing through the distant tunnel of Badgnoles, but when the thaw came they were no longer audible. The critical moment in the history of a railway axle appears, however, to be that which marks the sudden rise of temperature after the cold spell has for some time held the iron in its icy and compressive grip. The shaft that has been for a year or two undergoing slow crystallization is then, by a few successive shocks, brought to the fracture point, and the slightest jar or oscillation of the train may precipitate such a calamity as that which occurred at Shipton. That much may be done by railroad managers to avert such disasters in frosty weather is evident, provided their trains are then run with an eye to this danger. But the remedy lies deeper than this. It is very questionable whether any amount of inspection and care in the manufacture and working of rolling stock will ever prevent the occasional breakage of axles and tires. The true wisdom is to provide against the train leaving the track after such fractures have occurred, and some of the highest engineering authorities have approved the plan of the mid-guard rail. This idea consists simply of laying down a third rail in the centre of the track, which shall be no encumbrance and under no wear so long as the flanged wheels perform their office; but as soon as the derailment commences the guard rail interposes to keep the car in the line of the road. It is said that if the Great Western had been supplied with such a safeguard the disabled car might easily have run to the next station without accident or injury to any one. The introduction of the third rail on our wealthiest roads, whose express trains make forty miles an hour, would immensely enhance the safety of the passenger and not very materially increase the cost of the track. As the guard rail is exposed to no friction, except in case of accident, it would not require renewal for a great many years, and would probably pay for its cost in the increased popularity and reputation for safety it would give the lines adopting it. The discussion of its value from an economical and an engineering standpoint is timely and important to the travelling public, and we hope it may be fairly weighed by railway authorities in this country.

THE SKIDMORE in the neighborhood of New York is in its full glory, and, unless we have unseasonably warm weather, is likely to be good for a month.

THE STREET CARS are the chariots of disease and of death. The next step of the health authorities should be to require cleanliness, even if they cannot enforce other hygienic laws equally important.

PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE.

Robert Browning will shortly publish a volume, in all England, Ireland and Scotland only 137 daily papers.

This month that naughty Mordaunt divorce case comes on again in England.

Secretary Deane and Senator Benben E. Fenton were in this city yesterday.

Surgeon William M. King, United States Navy, is quarantined at the Albemarle Hotel.

Mr. Daniel Dougherty, of Philadelphia, is among the latest arrivals at the St. James Hotel.

Ex-Congressman D. S. Bennett and Mr. Edward R. Bacon, of Buffalo, are at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

Commodore John R. Goldsborough, United States Navy, has taken up his quarters at the Winchester House.

Mr. Jewell, wife of the Postmaster General, arrived at the Fifth Avenue Hotel last evening from Washington.

Look out for the domestic tiger. An English Coroner's jury has just found that a baby was killed by a hungry cat.

Mr. Franklin S. Gowen, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, is residing at the Brevoort Hotel.

A little work of British wild flowers, considered in their relation to insects, has been written by Sir John Lubbock.

All the Spanish priests have been instructed to offer up prayers for Alfonso and to acknowledge the receipt of the instruction. Business-like.

Mr. W. Oswald Charlton, of the British Legation at Washington, is registered at the Westmoreland Hotel. He will sail for England to-morrow in the steamship Java.

Mrs. Reuter, daughter of the Baron and Baroness Reuter, was married at St. George's, Hanover square, London, January 14, to Count Albert Magnus Otto Steenbuck, Secretary to the Swedish and Norwegian Legation.

M. Pierre La Houssaye, editor of the *Grand Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de la Dix-Neuvième Siècle*, died recently in Paris at the age of fifty-seven.

More investigation. Of 103 deaths from delirium tremens in the English army in India, 84 victims were sergeants and only 20 privates. So they propose to investigate how it is that sergeants can get liquor so much more freely.

The question relative to the admission of females to the courses of the faculty of medicine has been decided in favor of Mlle. Doumergue at Montpellier. She has been authorized to pursue the necessary studies in order to obtain the degree of doctor of medicine.

Sir Edward Creasey, the historian, is about to resign the appointment of Chief Justice of Ceylon, which he has held for more than fourteen years. It is said that the precarious state of his health would render a return to Ceylon in all likelihood fatal.

Here's a chance for loose silbusters. The London correspondent of the *Scotsman* writes:—"From a well informed source, I learn that an expedition of a remarkable character is being organized in Europe for the purpose of effecting a landing on the shores of a distant country. The object of the expedition will be to accomplish the overthrow of the existing government and to appoint as chief of the executive a man well known in the politics of a large part of the world. It is said that many persons of influence and wealth have pledged themselves to support or take part in the enterprise."

Gramatic scene at the reading of a will. A rich dame who recently died at an advanced age at Fontainebleau, left a will containing, among others, a bequest to her physician of all the objects contained in an olden oak chest of her cabinet de toilette, for "his enlightened care and the sage instructions" which had enabled her to live to such an advanced age. There was great commotion among the heirs, when this clause in the will was read, and greater curiosity to know what treasures had escaped them. The notary handed the key to the doctor, who on opening the chest found all the drugs and potions that he had ordered for his patient during the past twenty years.

More trouble about family silver. A plenipotentiary of the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel has appeared at Prague and claimed the silver plate, valued at 2,500,000 thalers, which the Elector of Hesse had taken with him to that place, and which was there left at his death. The Landgrave, who would have been her presumptive heir, had been annexed to Prussia, and who, having made his peace with Prussia, is in the Prussian service, claims this silver as forming part of the entailed property of the family. The Counts of Hanau, sons of the late Prince by his morganatic marriage, refuse to give it up unless the property of the late Prince, sequestered by Prussia and valued at 18,000,000 thalers, is restored to them.